

Why Pride Causes Me Problems, Part 2 - 1 Corinthians 4:8-9 – September 7th, 2014

- Today's teaching will be part two of a new series we began two weeks ago now, titled, "Why Pride Causes Me Problems."
- If you were to ask me what I thought was the source of most if not all the problems in a Christian's life, my answer would have to be pride.
- Whether the problems are financial, marital, or even spiritual, all you have to do is peel back the layers and you'll find the problem of pride.

- In the arena of the financial, one need look no further than the pride of life, which fuels the pursuit of riches and with it the god of mammon.
- It's been said that we are all prone to spend money we don't have on possessions we don't need in order to impress people we don't like.
- Be that as it may, let me hasten to say there's nothing wrong with having possessions, as long as the possessions don't in turn have you.

- Then there's the arena of the marital, where one need look no further than one's pride creating strife and as such it in turn breeds quarrels.
- This because one or both, whether husband or wife, are unwilling in their pride, to humble themselves and admit that they too were wrong.
- It's for this reason that the pages of Holy Writ are replete with passage after passage concerning the pride problem; consider just Proverbs:

Proverbs 13:10 (NIV) Where there is strife, there is pride, but wisdom is found in those who take advice.

Proverbs 21:4 (NIV) Haughty eyes and a proud heart—the unplowed field of the wicked—produce sin.

Proverbs 15:18 (NIV) A hot-tempered person stirs up conflict, but the one who is patient calms a quarrel.

- Perhaps it goes without saying, but these warnings concerning pride apply to every arena, whether it's the financial, marital, or the spiritual.
- Actually, I would submit that by the time one who is filled with pride wreaks havoc in a church, they've already damaged the other two first.
- By that I mean; there's already evidence of damage done to the marriage and in the finances, which becomes a precursor to the spiritual.

- I'll take it a step further and suggest that this gives way to both the wickedest and worst form of pride, which is that of one's spiritual pride.
- Enter our text today, here in the Apostle Paul's first epistle to this carnal and arrogant Corinthian church that was fully given over to pride.
- Sadly, the problems that ensued from the spiritual pride would rise to the level of the Apostle Paul bluntly rebuking them starting in verse 6.

1. Pride propels me beyond what's Biblical (Verse 6a)

-v6a Paul says he's applied these things to himself and Apollos for their benefit so they'll learn what not going beyond what's written means.

2. Pride deceives me to think I'm better than others (Verse 6b)

-v6b Paul goes on to say that when they don't go beyond what's Biblical, only then will they not take pride in one man over against another.

3. Pride causes me to boast in my accomplishments (Verse 7)

-v7 Paul rebukes them for their boasting as if they were different from everyone else thinking that what they had received wasn't from God.

4. Pride makes me think that I'm entitled (Verses 8-9)

(8) Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich! You have become kings—and that without us! How I wish that you really had become kings so that we might be kings with you! (9) For it seems to me that God has put us apostles on display at the end of the procession, like men condemned to die in the arena. We have been made a spectacle to the whole universe, to angels as well as to men.

-v8 Paul says you've already got everything you want you've become rich kings and without us who wish you were so we could join with you.

-v9 He likens himself on display at the end of a procession like condemned men as a spectacle to the whole universe who died in the arena.

- I suppose you could say Paul in his classic sanctified sarcasm is shaming them for thinking they're entitled to everything they had and did.

G. Campbell Morgan - "He was laughing at them with holy laughter, and yet with utter contempt for what they had been doing."

- I say sanctified sarcasm or holy laughter for a number of reasons not the least of which is the image of a procession Paul uses in verse 9.
- Let me explain, the English word Paul uses in verse nine translated "spectacle," is the Greek word theatron, which is where we get theater.
- The reason Paul uses this is that he's likening it to the coliseum where the defeated captives were paraded at the end of the procession.

One commentator draws a poignant picture of what this imagery meant, "The image of 1 Corinthians 4:9 is either from the coliseum or the parade of a conquering Roman general, where he displayed his armies first, the booty second, and at the end of the procession, the defeated captives who would be condemned to die in the arena. Just as before going into the arena, the gladiators said, *morituri salutamus* ("we who will die salute you"), so Paul now salutes the Corinthian Christians."

- Here's where I'm going with all of this all of us as Christians here in this wonderful church today are also in this coliseum back in Paul's day.
- Here's how I get there, either we fancy ourselves high minded observing the spectacle below, or we are paraded in that procession below.
- I'm of the belief that this stark contrast can be best seen in the striking contrast between two of the seven churches found in Revelation 2-3.

- Namely, the striking contrast between the church of Philadelphia, and the church of Laodicea. Simply put, we're either one or the other.
- In closing I'll read a portion from both letters, and in so doing, I hope that we'll all have ears to hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Revelation 3:17-20 17 You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. 18 I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see. 19 Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent. 20 Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.

Revelation 3:8-12 8 I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name. 9 I will make those who are of the synagogue of Satan, who claim to be Jews though they are not, but are liars—I will make them come and fall down at your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you. 10 Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth. 11 I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown. 12 The one who is victorious I will make a pillar in the temple of my God.